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Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee
Fourteenth meeting
Rome, 17–21 September 2018
Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda*

Technical work: process for the evaluation of perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride pursuant to paragraphs 5 and 6 of part III of Annex B to the Convention

Process for the evaluation of perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride pursuant to paragraphs 5 and 6 of part III of Annex B to the Stockholm Convention

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Paragraph 5 of part III of Annex B to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants provides that the Conference of the Parties to the Convention shall evaluate the continued need for perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride (PFOSF) for the various acceptable purposes and specific exemptions listed in Annex B on the basis of available scientific, technical, environmental and economic information. In accordance with paragraph 6 of part III of Annex B, the evaluation shall take place no later than in 2015 and every four years thereafter, in conjunction with a regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

2. In paragraph 1 of decision SC-6/4, the Conference of the Parties adopted the process for the evaluation of PFOS, its salts and PFOSF set out in the annex to that decision. Subsequently, in paragraph 7 of decision SC-7/5, the Conference of the Parties amended the schedule for the evaluation process, as set out in the annex to that decision, and decided to undertake the evaluation of PFOS, its salts and PFOSF at its ninth meeting.

3. By its decision POPRC-13/4, the Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee at its thirteenth meeting established an intersessional working group to undertake the activities specified in the process set out in the annex to decision SC-6/4 and agreed to work in accordance with the terms of reference set out in the annex to document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.13/INF/9.

4. In line with the terms of reference, the intersessional working group prepared a draft report on the assessment of alternatives to PFOS, its salts and PFOSF as set out in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.14/INF/8, and the Secretariat prepared a draft report on the evaluation of PFOS, its salts and PFOSF as set out in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.14/INF/9.

5. Furthermore, in paragraphs 7 and 8 of decision POPRC-13/2, the Committee noted that there was evidence that sulfluramid degraded to pentadecafluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and that sulfluramid

* UNEP/POPS/POPRC.14/1.

was included in the risk profile on PFOS, its salts and PFOSF (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.2/17/Add.5) while the relevant CAS number was not included in Annex B to the Convention, and decided to proceed with sulfluramid within the process for the evaluation of PFOS, its salts and PFOSF pursuant to paragraphs 5 and 6 of part III of Annex B to the Convention.

II. Proposed action

6. The Committee may wish:

(a) To complete the report on the assessment of alternatives to PFOS, its salts and PFOSF, including recommendations, on the basis of the draft report set out in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.14/INF/8, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties;

(b) To review and provide comments on the draft report prepared by the Secretariat on the evaluation of PFOS, its salts and PFOSF set out in document UNEP/POPS/POPRC.14/INF/9;

(c) To address how to proceed with sulfluramid, considering that the chemical may meet the definition of a PFOA-related substance and at the same time is included in the risk profile on PFOS, its salts and PFOSF while the relevant CAS number is not included in Annex B to the Convention.